



**RICK SCOTT**  
GOVERNOR

September 11, 2013

Secretary Herschel Vinyard  
Florida Department of Environmental Protection  
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, M.S. 49  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Dear Secretary Vinyard:

The Army Corps of Engineers continues to discharge harmful levels of freshwater from Lake Okeechobee into the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie estuaries, impacting communities in Southeast and Southwest Florida. I have called on the federal government to do the work that is needed to improve the Lake's dike system so communities are protected from storms and our estuaries are not diminished.

We have worked with local partners to speed-up projects to better protect communities from the Corps' releases. In the past month we've announced a \$40 million investment to fully fund the storm water treatment area component of the C-44 project, which will treat and restore the quality of water delivered to the St. Lucie. Additionally, we announced an historic \$90 million investment to complete a new 2.6 mile section of the Tamiami trail bridge, which will allow for additional flow south. In the short term, this administration is working with Senator Negrón to approve a \$2.7 million investment that will supplement the South Florida Water Management District's (SFWMD) efforts as they pump excess flows away from estuaries and onto state and private land.

As we discussed weeks ago, these commitments provide a significant path forward in restoring water quality in the region, and are essential to supporting Florida families. That's why as we continue to tackle every option at our disposal, I am asking the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the SFWMD to expedite any and all relevant permitting requests and other requests from local partners to help support the impacted regions in their time of need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Scott".

Rick Scott  
Governor